

SYN. NO. _____

AGN. NO. _____

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS ZEV YAROSLAVSKY
AND GLORIA MOLINA

November 9, 2004

During the last few years, when county finances were particularly strained, all county departments were asked to insure that departmental spending be kept in line with available/budgeted revenues. This has been especially true in the case of the Sheriff's Department, where the Sheriff has made a strong and difficult commitment to meet this guiding principle of fiscal management.

One of the consequences of the Sheriff's budget management strategies was the loss of inmate capacity in the county's jail system. In fact, the loss of bed space in the jails has resulted in a reduction of capacity from its recent peak 22,214 to its present 17,400. This reduction has forced the Sheriff to release thousands of inmates from the jails before completing their sentences.

As a result of this and other cutbacks in the Sheriff's department and other law enforcement agencies in the county, the Board of Supervisors placed Measure A on yesterday's ballot in order to raise the necessary funds to restore the cuts and expand law enforcement and related services countywide. With yesterday's failure of Measure A, funds that the Sheriff was anticipating for these law enforcement purposes will not be forthcoming.

MOTION

MOLINA _____

BURKE _____

YAROSLAVSKY _____

ANTONOVICH _____

KNABE _____

However, the continued early release of inmates diminishes the integrity of our criminal justice system and undermines the difficult and dangerous work of law enforcement. The consequences of this situation are felt in every community of Los Angeles County. Sheriff Baca developed a Master Plan that focused on improving jail operations, specifically the pros and cons of opening or expanding particular facilities and costs of these options.

While yesterday's election results make it impossible to accomplish all of the Sheriff's goals, the recent closing of the county's financial books, and the larger than anticipated fund balance, may afford the Sheriff's Department the ability to at least address the problems associated with the "early release" program.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE that the CAO and the Sheriff's Department be directed to jointly prepare a plan to end the present early release program in our County jails for consideration by the Board of Supervisors in three weeks, including identifying the amount and source of funding required.

JC I:\early release